

Spice girls

Among the terraces in a tiny shopping strip on Union Street in Brunswick you will find Sarkies With Love. It's the kind of local diner you hunt for, that's worth crossing town for and it's the first restaurant for chef, Aida Ahmar (pictured) and partner Del O'Donnell. Ahmar's no novice in the kitchen with a CV that includes Rosati, Halcyon, Sonsie, Mo Mo and Dante's. Classically trained in French and Italian cooking with a Middle-Eastern background and penchant for Asian fare, she likes to experiment. Breakfast might be emu prosciutto with lemon myrtle hollandaise. For lunch, house-made roast pumpkin gnocchi, crispy-



skin quail on mint-pea puree, or sumac-spiced barramundi. As for dessert, trifle has been given an extreme makeover.

MICHELLE POTTS

Sarkies With Love, 126 Union Street, Brunswick, phone 9380 9444. Opens for dinner Wed-Sun, lunch Thurs-Sun and weekend breakfast. Licensed and BYO wine.

GARY ME

Editor's letter

Mr Gadget in our house is son No. 2 who turned 21 last week. His latest kitchen buy a few weeks ago was a super set of five knives, one promising to slice a tomato in half in mid-air — just like on the late night shopping shows. The rest of us have learned to stay out of the kitchen when he whips up the Sunday-night Napoli sauce. The knife block sits on the bench beside the sandwich maker, the waffle maker, the toaster, the bread maker, the food processor, the juice extractor and the hand-held mixer. In the cupboard below is the hit of the last New Year's Eve bash — an electric chocolate fountain that stirs and warms the chocolate to dipping consistency. The kitchen drawers open to reveal an impressive array of gadgets for every purpose but we don't have any of the wondrous little numbers highlighted in our cover story — yet. They're divided into two themes for the sophisticated home cook — the bold (practical) and the beautiful (stylish). Check out pages 4 and 5.

Veronica Ridge, Editor



Cheese please

This striking blue-vein cheese, named after the patron saint of gold miners, St Barbara, has been aged for two months to develop its natural mould and creamy texture. The cheese, by Goldfields Farmhouse Cheese, will be one of many cow, goat, sheep and buffalo milk cheeses vying for prizes at the Australian Specialist Cheese Show at the weekend. The show will run from 11am to 4pm on Sunday, August 12, at the Palladium Room, Crown Towers Hotel, Crown Entertainment Complex. Tickets \$35, includes unlimited cheese tastings and five wine and/or beer tastings. Children under 15 admitted free. For bookings contact

Penny Lawson on 9381 1777 or australiancheese@ihug.com.au. Limited numbers of tickets available at the door. Master classes on cheese and wine matching or cheese and wine matching \$15, but essential.

australiancheese.org

GAIL T

St Barbara cheese retails for about \$150g, available from Provost Fine Foods Shop and Cafe, Brunswick West.



DIARY

AUGUST-OCTOBER

Pressing engagements

Enjoy ouzo and octopus at The Press Club on the first Wednesday of August, September and October (not, in fact, every Wednesday in August as we stated last week). \$55 includes ouzo and octopus-based dishes. From 6-9pm. 72 Flinders Street, city. Phone 9677 9677.

AUGUST 9

Winemaker's dinner

Winemaker Joe Irvine hosts a Schild Estate (Barossa) winemaker's dinner at Glencoe restaurant. The cost of \$80 includes four courses plus wine. 7.30pm, at 766 Whitehorse Road, Mont Albert. Phone 9877 4500.

AUGUST 10

Geelong treat

Chef Simon Parrott hosts a five-course degustation to compliment a selection of Bannockburn wines, Fishermen's Pier restaurant, Yarra Street, Geelong. Phone 5222 4100.

There will always be a place for cleverly designed kitchen objects.

...you have to peel the cheese...
...the blade," says Susie Hawes,
...owner of Scullerymade in
...vern. (Cheese knives from \$30,
...llerymade, Malvern).

Clever design isn't always
...sive either. Cuisipro's tea
...er is a quirky little gadget;
...s streamlined design and
...ncy, elongated plunger are
...ose-driven. The tiny holes
...dded around its exterior help to
...se the tea more rapidly than an
...inary teapot, while the plunger
...signed to get every ounce of
...our out of into your tea". There's
...a practical little saucer at the
...om to catch the drips. It can be
...ed for a single cup or a pot, and
...bles as a spice infuser. (Cuisipro
...nifer, \$15.20, The Essential
...redient).

On occasion, a clunky product
...ears that never takes off because
...rather narrowly focused but the
...ck Press, a cast brass ornament
...ighing 22 kilograms, is highly
...ed in French restaurants for
...acting blood, marrow and juices
...from a duck carcass, with
...which to prepare the
...sauce. In Melbourne, it
...is "an occasional sale but
...there's a story behind
...every purchase," Hawes
...says. (Scullerymade,
...\$2969).

With five
...international design

awards under its belt, the Eva Solo
...porcelain table grill is perfect for
...apartments, balconies or turning
...a picnic into a barbecue. It's a
...stunner, but compact, easy to carry
...and dishwasher friendly.

The Eva Solo's cylindrical kitchen
...scales are equally as versatile,
...doubling as a measuring cup, while
...the leaf-shaped fruit peeler and slim-
...line grater follow the same focus
...on form and function. (Eva Solo
...table grill \$395, scales \$175, grater
...\$145, fruit peeler \$50, Luft and Make
...Designed Objects).

Magppie's elegant Rea Tea
...set, sculptured from porcelain
...and stainless steel, was created
...in the Magppie studio but other
...pieces in the range are developed
...in collaboration with a team of
...international designers, including
...Karim Rashid. He has designed
...works for Armani, Prada and Issey
...Miyake and for Magppie. The
...champagne bucket is dressed in
...sexy sylphlike contours of 18/10
...stainless steel. (Magppie Rea Tea set,
...\$175, Kleen Design; Karim Rashid's
...Eros champagne bucket, \$220, Make
...Designed Objects).

There will always be a place for
...beautiful, cleverly designed kitchen
...objects in our homes.

As the late Frank Lloyd Wright,
...architect of the Guggenheim
...Museum of Modern Art New York,
...furniture designer, critic and writer,
...once said: "Give me the luxuries of
...life and I will willingly do without
...the necessities."

Familiar friends

Everyday innovations that changed our lives are sometimes loved more deeply.

If a designer's dream is to create a legacy upon which to hang a lifetime of inspirational effort, few have achieved the heights of Australia's Krisk bean stringer and slicer, now in its 84th year. About the size of a large Stanley knife, it chops



it into three long pieces in one action.

It is exported worldwide. (Bean stringer, \$5.95, Cuisine World, city; Hoese, Matchbox and Mitre 10).

Annoyed with difficulty of stacking funnels and colanders, designer Boje Estermann was inspired by the sun shield of an old reflex camera to create a clever funnel design that compresses concertina-like to store flat. The colander follows the same principle, and it's strong enough to carry the weight of freshly cooked pasta or potatoes, hard enough to retain its shape, supple enough to flex



and fold and survive the repetition, and resilient to hot and cold temperatures. You can even wash it folded in the dishwasher. Designed for Normann Copenhagen, it is made of Santoprene with a stainless-steel strainer, and comes in red, yellow, green and black. (Colander \$95; funnel \$45, Make Designed Objects, Carlton; Kleen Design, Fitzroy).

Occasionally, brave attempts at aesthetic design are foiled for the most unforeseen reasons. Susie Hawes, part owner of Scullerymade in Malvern, is not convinced home users will warm to peeling a carrot between Westmark's double peeler which looks like a pair of spread-eagled legs - no matter how functional a tool it is. "It's made in Germany



and it's like having two peelers running up and down a carrot, it has blades top and bottom, so it's fast," she says. It's German-made and popular in commercial kitchens. (\$27.95, Scullerymade, Malvern).

Was there ever a more welcome addition to the utensil drawer than the silicone pastry brush? Cuisine World sells three to four dozen of the things each month. "You can buy a standard pastry brush with bristles but over time they start to break down and break off into the food. People are amazed



at how well the silicone brush holds oil and egg white," says the store's Greg Vivas. (Brushes \$8.95 to \$15, Cuisine World, city).

The Cuisipro team's Snap Fit Cookie Cutters are designed to lock together like Leggo for easy storage. They are made from seamless plastic to avoid kinks and come star, round and fluted shapes, the cutters range in size from 5cm to 11cm. These little beauties are



also top-shelf dishwasher save and guaranteed for 25 years. (\$15.20, The Essential Ingredient).

LISA MITCHELL AND MICHELLE POTTS

Taste the difference

We are intensely passionate about our bread and committed to using traditional production methods. We combine natural ingredients, shape the loaves by hand and set them down to

